

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-14 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 DRC-01 NIC-01

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S E C R E T MOSCOW 15149

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UK, UR, XF

SUBJ: VISIT OF BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY SIR ALEC DOUGLAS-HOME

1. SUMMARY: THE MEETINGS BETWEEN SIR ALEC DOUGLAS-HOME WITH GROMYKO AND PODGORNY WERE HELD IN A FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE. CLEARLY, THE SOVIETS ARE STRIVING TO EXPAND COOPERATION WITH THE UK. ON THE MIDDLEEAST, WHICH ABSORBED A GOOD PART OF THE DISCUSSIONS, THE SOVIETS EXPRESSED ANXIETIES OVER THE FAILURE OF THE ISRAELIS TO WITHDRAW TO THE OCTOBER 22 CEASE-FIRE LINE. THEY BELIEVE THAT THE CONFERENCE MIGHT NOT BE HLED AT ALL UNLESS THE ISRAELIS DO SO. THE SOVIETS FURTHER INSISTED THAT THE ISRAELIES WITHDRAW FROM ALL OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. GROMYKO AND PODGORNY BOTH EXPRESSED AGREE-
MENT WITH THE CONCEPT OF DEMILITARIZED ZONES. EMPHASIS WAS PLACED ON THE FACT THAT A PEACE SETTLEMENT COULD ONLY BE SECURE IF GUARANTEED BY THE GREAT POWERES. END SUMMARY.

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2. AT THIS INITIATIVE, SIR ALEC BRIEFED ME SEPARATELY (FOLLOWING

HIS BRIEFING OF EC AMBASSADORS) ON HIGHLIGHTS OF HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH GROMYKO AND PODGORNYY OVER THE PAST TWO DAYS. SIR ALEC MET THREE TIMES WITH GROMYKO AND WAS RECEIVED BY PODGORNYY FOR ROUGHLY AN HOUR AND FIFTEEN MINUTES.

3. GENERAL IMPRESSIONS: SIR ALEC SAID THE DISCUSSIONS WERE HELD IN A VERY FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE. THE SOVIETS WERE RELAXED AND IN A CONFIDENT MOOD; THEY MADE IT QUITE CLEAR THAT THEY WISHED TO DEVELOP THE CLOSEST POSSIBLE COOPERATION WITH THE UK. PAST EVENTS, SUCH AS THE EXPULSION OF THE 105 SOVIET AGENTS, WERE NOT MENTIONED. IN GENERAL, SIR ALEC RECEIVED THE IMPRESSION THE USSR WISHED TO PRESERVE THE STATUS QUO IN EUROPE, PERMITTING THEM TO PURSUE MORE IMMEDIATE MATTERS ELSEWHERE.

4. MIDDLE EAST: A GOOD DEAL OF TIME WAS SPENT ON THE MIDDLE EAST. GROMYKO NOTED THAT THE SOVIETS WERE PLEASED WITH THEIR CONTACTS WITH THE US ON THIS MATTER. THESE CONTACTS WERE CONTINUOUS AND VALUED FOR THEIR POSSIBILITIES IN BOTH THE SHORT AND LONG TERM. THE SOVIETS EXPRESSED ANXIETIES OVER THE IMMEDIATE AND LONG-TERM ASPECTS OF THE MIDDLE EAST SITUATION. THE SOVIETS INSISTED THAT THE ISRAELIS SHOULD WITHDRAW TO THE OCTOBER 22 CEASE-FIRE LINE. URGENCY WAS ATTACHED TO THIS MATTER SINCE THE SOVIETS FELT THAT THE CONFERENCE MIGHT NOT OTHERWISE TAKE PLACE. THE SOVIETS FURTHER INSISTED THAT IT WAS NECESSARY FOR ISRAEL TO EVACUATE ALL OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. SIR ALEC GAINED THE IMPRESSION THE SOVIETS WANTED THE CONFERENCE TO START. GROMYKO EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THE PALESTINIANS SHOULD BE REPRESENTED AT THE CONFERENCE BUT FELT THAT THE ARABS, THEMSELVES, SHOULD DECIDE WHO SHOULD REPRESENT THE PALESTINIANS. SIR ALEC THOUGHT THE SOVIETS ANTICIPATE THAT THE SECRETARY GENERAL WILL PRESIDE OVER THE CONFERENCE BUT THE SOVIETS DID NOT SAY SO IN SPECIFIC TERMS. SIR ALEC TOLD THE SOVIETS THAT IF THE US AND USSR WORKING TOGETHER COULD ACHIEVE PEACE IN THE AREA THAT WAS FINE. IF DIFFICULTIES AROSE, HOWEVER, THE UK, AS A PERMANENT MEMBER OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL, WOULD BE PLEASED TO PLAY AS CONSTRUCTIVE A ROLE AS IT POSSIBLY COULD. ACCORDING TO SIR ALEC, THE SOVIETS DEFINITELY SEE THEMSELVES AS ONE OF THE PERMANENT GUARANTORS OF ANY PEACE SETTLEMENT. SIR ALEC PRESSED BOTH

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GROMYKO AND PODGORNYY ON THE SUBJECT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DEMILITARIZED ZONES. PODGORNYY AGREED WITH THIS CONCEPT AND THE NECESSITY FOR INTERNATIONAL POLICING OF THE AREA. PODGORNYY ADDED THAT THE SOVIETS BELIEVE THERE CAN BE NO PEACE IN THE AREA WITHOUT GUARANTEES FOR ISRAEL. ISRAEL, PODGORNYY ADDED, HAS NO FUTURE WITHOUT GUARANTEES BY THE GREAT POWERS. PODGORNYY STRESSED THAT THE DEMILITARIZED ZONES SHOULD EXIST ON BOTH SIDES OF THE FRONTIERS AND HE SEEMED TO BELIEVE THAT THE DEMILITARIZED ZONES

SHOULD BE EQUIDISTANT FROM THE FRONTIERS SEPARATING THE SIDES. SIR ALEC, ON THIS SCORE, COMMENTED THAT ISRAEL WAS A SMALL STATE, IMPLYING THAT THE EQUIDISTANT CONCEPT MIGHT BE DIFFICULT FOR ISRAEL TO ACCEPT. WHEN SIR ALEC BROUGHT UP THE SUBJECT OF LIMITING ARMS SHIPMENTS TO THE MIDDLE EAST, GROMYKO REPLIED THERE HAD BEEN SOME DISCUSSIONS WITH THE US ON THIS TOPIC, BUT IT HAD NOT BEEN CARRIED VERY FAR.

5. MBFR: GROMYKO NOTED THAT THIS WAS COMPLICATED NOGOTIATION AND THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD NOT LOSE PATIENCE. GROMYKO URGED THE WESTERN POWERS TO GIVE FURTHER CONSIDERATION AND STUDY TO THE SOVIET PROPOSALS. THE GUIDING PRINCIPLE GROMYKO ADDED, SHOULD BE THAT NEITHER SIDE SHOULD SEEK TO GAIN UNILATERAL ADVANTAGE FROM THE NEGOTIATIONS. SIR ALEC NOTED THAT THE SOVIETS ALREADY HAVE AN ADVANTAGE ON THE GROUND AND THAT THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.

6. CSCE: IN DISCUSSION ON THIS SUBJECT, THE SOVIETS CLEARLY DREW THE LINE ON ANY PRACTICAL MEASURES WHICH MIGHT BE PERCEIVED AS BRINING ABOUT INTERNAL LIBERALIZATION IN THE SOVIET UNION.

7. THE ANGLO-SOVIETS COMMUNIQUE, WHICH IS EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE UNTIL 1600 HOURS GMT, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5, IS BEING SENT VIA SEPTTEL.
DUBS

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